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AUTHOR Hoyt, Kenneth B.
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ABSTRACT

These remarks by the Director, Office of Career Education (OE) suggest the need for career education to operate as a concept, career guidance to operate as a service, and vocational education to operate as a program. This paper defines these three areas and elaborates on how counselors can make them best function, in a complementary way, for the students they serve. In conclusion, he outlines six student needs which counselors must unite to meet: (1) recognize and capitalize on the increasingly close relationships between education and work that exist now and will exist in the future, (2) allow the need for work to become a more meaningful part of the total lifestyle of the individual, (3) protect freedom of choice for the individual, (4) provide systematic professional assistance in career decision making, (5) acquire general career skills needed for career adaptability, and (6) acquire sets of job-specific skills that can be used in making a successful transition from the world of schooling to the world of paid employment. (Author/HMV)

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CAREER GUIDANCE, CAREER EDUCATION, AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Kenneth B. Hoyt
Director
Office of Career Education

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Introduction

About ten years ago, I recall speaking to the Illinois Guidance and Personnel Association on a topic entitled "SS Needs of Counselors." So far as I know, that speech was never published and I have no copies of it. The two kinds of counselor "SS needs" I identified were, as I remember them, "Security and Status" as opposed to a second I called "Service to Students." The basic question I raised was "which of these two kinds of SS needs is in first place?" Now, ten years later, I find the question still appropriate even though the current concerns behind it have changed somewhat.

At the time of the Illinois speech, I was primarily concerned about the disproportionate amount of time counselors were devoting in efforts to meet the guidance needs of college-bound students. My major effect was a plea to give equal attention and to develop equal expertise in meeting the guidance needs of the vast majority of students - those who will never attain the baccaularate degree. Formation of the Guidance Division of the American Vocational Association in 1969 stands as clear evidence that I was not alone in this concern The basic justification for this AVA Division, when considered in light of APGA and all of its national Divisions, is the potential the Guidance Division of AVA has for assuring that the guidance needs of students and prospective students of vocational education will be met. These students needs brought us

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together and should keep us together.

Enactment and implementation of Part D, Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, with its emphasis on career guidance beginning in the elementary school, has served as a primary source of Federal funding for initial demonstration efforts in career education. Initial conceptualization concep' -- particularly those of Dr. Gene Bottoms and of Dr. Edwin Herr - are recognized and emphasized by Dr. Sidney P. Marland, Jr. in his new book, Career Education. The record is clear on this point.

Now, in 1974, we find Career Education a part of the law of the land and career education efforts underway in almost one third of all school districts in the United States. We find a simultaneous national interest and concern for improving the quality of both career guidance and of vocational education. I submit that casual, not incidential, relationships exist here. The career education movement, with its emphasis on education as preparation for work, has found enthusiastic national acceptance because it speaks to a real need of almost all citizens. Yet, the delivery of effective career education is directly dependent on our ability to strengthen greatly both career guidance and programs of vocational education. Unless this is recognized, career education will never work.

Today, we find ourselves right back to the same question I raised with Illinois counselors ten years ago; namely, is our primary concern one of building security and status for ourselves or providing services to students? I submit that those who, today, are asking the question "how can we promote and develop career guidance"?, or "How can we promote and develop vocational education?" or "How can we promote and develop career education?" are all

asking questions that can and will often be interpreted to be in the realm of "status and security" questions. It is only when we are willing to make, as our primary question, "What student needs exist and what contributions can we make to meeting such needs?" that a services to students" emphasis will emerge. It is my deepest personal and professional belief that, whenever and to whatever extent we put our own needs above those of students, we have lost our basic reason for being and the justification of our professional existence.

Let us, then, try to think about students and their needs rather than about ourselves and our needs. I am firmly convinced that, if we do so, we will get and deserve credit for ourselves. I am equally convinced that, if we fail to do so, we will receive, and deserve, continued criticism.

When I ask myself "what do our students need?", it seems to me that they need career education to operate as a concept, career guidance to operate as a service, and vocational education to operate as a program. I make no claim that my thoughts on these matters are correct, but only that they exist. I would like to devote the remainder of this presentation to sharing these thoughts with you.

Career Education As A Concept

There are two basic student needs in our culture that combine to form the rationale for career education. The first is the need, on the part of all students, to recognize and capitalize on the increasingly close relationships between education and work that exist now and will exist in the future. The second is the need for work to become a more meaningful part of the total lifestyle of the individual.

Career education seeks to meet these student needs through a combination of both integrative and collaborative efforts. We seek integration, within the formal system of education in order that Education, as preparation for work, will become both a prominent and a permanent goal of all who teach and of all who learn at every level of education. Further, we seek collaboration, in meeting these student needs, among the formal system of Education, the business-labor-industry-government-professional community, and the home and family structure. In all such efforts, the emphasis is on how much help accrues to the student, not on who gets credit for helping.

The key to success of career education is recognition that a wide variety of persons - students, teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, businessmen, labor union members, church workers, and government workers- have responsibilies to assume and roles to play if career education is to meet the two basic student needs identified here. While maintaining their primary roles, the infusion of career education efforts makes all such persons "career educators." That is why, for example, we say both career guidance and vocational education are key components of career education. True, a career education coordinator is needed as a "ramrod", but the key help to students is provided by "career educators", both within and outside of the formal educational system.

The crucial and critical costs of career education are measured in time, effort, and commitment much more than they are in dollars. It depends on the expertise and dedication of everyone, not the replacement of anyone. It is a <u>concept</u> that demands the presence of <u>programs</u> and the provisions of a wide variety of <u>services</u>. But, by itself, career education is not properly viewed as either a program or as a service -

as something to compete with, substitute for, or replace any program or service that now exists. Rather, it is best seen as a unifying force that provides a centrality of purpose around which a wide variety of persons can rally and work together in meeting these two crucial student needs.

Career Guidance As A Service

A democratic society is rooted in the opportunity for free and informed choices of its citizens. It is the basic student need for freedom of choice, coupled with the need for systematic assistance in reasoned decision-making, that combine to form the rationale for career guidance. The career guidance movement is rooted in the psychology of career development, the sociology of work in our culture, and the economic necessity of work for the survival of our system of government. It combines assistance in decision making with assistance in implementing decisions that persons have made. The provision of information about both the individual and about opportunities available to the individual is a critical part of the base of career guidance. Equally critical is the provision of expertise and assistance in the career decision-making process. Career guidance has a solid substantive base of knowledge and expertise. Those who acquire expertise in this field, while carrying a variety of titles, are generically, included in the professional family of counselors.

Conceptually, career guidance and career education have much in common. That is, both are concerned with all students at all levels of education and in all educational settings. Both are rooted, methodologically, in the

career development process. Both are developmentally oriented with concerns that extend from the pre-school through the retirement years. Both depend, for their success, on involvement and assistance from a great variety of persons from a number of disciplines and in a number of kinds of settings. There is, however, one essential difference which, if recognized, makes career guidance be regarded as a service and career education as a concept. That difference lies in the absolute necessity for career guidance specialists to interact with and provide direct assistance to persons in an individual and/or group relationship. While, to be sure, the total career guidance process is dependent on the efforts of many parts of society. career guidance must, above all else, be dedicated to providing direct assistance to students by persons with some expertise in this field. A career education coordinator is charged with encouraging and coordinating the efforts of many persons and segments of society, but not with providing direct, programmatic assistance to individuals. That is why career education is a concept. A career guidance specialist, while also counting on assistance from manh others, knows that part of her or his job is providing direct professional assistance to students in making and implementing career decisions. That is why career guidance is a serivce.

It is because of the need to provide direct assistance to students that there will always be a bigger need for career guidance specialists than for career education coordinators. Career education coordinators, if successful, will increase greatly the need for career guidance specialists. Career guidance specilialist, if properly prepared and professionally assigned, will

be crucial persons in the successful implementation of the career education concept. Career education and career guidance need each other, but they are not the same thing. One is a concept while the other is a service. The essential difference lies in the necessity for providing direct assistance to students. At least this is the way it seems to me at the present time.

Vocational Education As A Program

In the field of Education, the word "program" properly implies the concept of instruction - the vehicle of the teaching-learning process - and a body of knowledge and skills which hopefully will be sought by students. Educational "programs" are organized into curricula, courses, and instructional activities. They depend on the teacher-student relationship for success. They demand a number of instructional staff members, building space, and instructional tools, equipment, and materials. They are, without doubt, the most expensive (in terms of dollar investment) part of Education. With this description, it should be apparent why I do not wish to view either career education or career guidance as educational programs. It should be equally apparent why vocational education is an educational program.

The basic student needs to be met by vocational education are, it seems to me, two in number. The first is the need to acquire general career skills that will enable students to adapt to and be adaptable in a very rapidly changing occupational society. The second is the need to provide students with sets of job specific skills that will enable them to successfully make the transition from the world of schooling to the world of paid employment. While, in a career education sense, these two basic student

needs are ones of all students and so responsibilities of all educators, vocational education has chosen to assume special responsibility for helping those students who do not plan to graduate from a four year college or university meet these needs. Since this, at present, is estimated to constitute approximately 80% of all secondary school students, it is clear that vocational education has large and growing responsibilities to meet. Vocational education has suffered for years because of a false societal worship of the value of a college degree. Our total society has, and continues, to suffer much more because of its failure to provide adequate support and recognition to vocational education. It will do career education no good to help students want to work unless the educational system changes in ways that will enable students to acquire the vocational skills necessary for work in these times. It will do career guidance no good to help students in the decision making process so long as an adequate variety of vocational education decisions remain unavailable to most students. The rationale for and the future of both career education and of career guidance are, it seems to me, directly dependent on our success in improving the quality, variety, and levels of vocational education available to both youths and adults throughout the nation.

Because of the need for expensive equipment, enlarged areas for classroom instruction, and the absolute necessity for closer teacher-student relationships, vocational education does cost more than many other kinds of instructional programs. For years, the general public, including many professional educators, have been stingy in their support of vocational education and generous in their criticisms. Both career education and

career guidance are currently experiencing some success in their efforts to reverse this situation and to gain more support for vocational education. We must all, it seems to me, recognize that vocational education is a program that is crucial to the success of career guidance as a service and to the success of career education as a concept. To whatever extent career guidance and career education lose sight of this basic fact, both will be unsuccessful in meeting student needs.

The Price to Pay

I have spoken here about a combination of six student needs that are crying to be met. These include the need to:

1. Recognize and capitalize on the increasingly close relationships between education and work that exist now and will exist in the future.
2. Allow the need for work to become a more meaningful part of the total lifestyle of the individual.
3. Protect freedom of choice for the individual.
4. Provide systematic, professional assistance in career decision making.
5. Acquire general career skills needed for career adaptability.
6. Acquire sets of job specific skills that can be used in making a successful transition from the world of schooling to the world of paid employment

It is my firm and clear belief that we will meet each of these needs best by keeping all six in mind and as high priority items on our individual professional agendas. I am equally convinced that, to the

extent any of us attempt to meet any one of these needs at the expense of any other, our students will have lost, not gained, by the action. At the present time, I am seeing two kinds of activities going on, both of which I consider negative for those who seek to serve students. The first, and of least importance, is a matter of semantics. I cannot believe that we are being helpful to students when some of us use the term "career education," others use the term "career development education", and still others use the term "life career development" when we all mean essentially the same thing. We have plenty of "enemies" in various parts of society. For those of us who share the same beliefs and the same goals to argue or bicker among ourselves seems, to say the least, counter-productive to me. I think there are basic and essential differences to emphasize between "career education" and "career guidance" and have tried to indicate the basic differences here. We don't need to create differences that don't exist.

The second kind of activity that currently worries me is, I guess, perhaps best described as that of "turfsmanship". It is reflected in those who ask such questions as "Is your field a part of mine or is my field a part of yours?", or, "How much money will I get and how much will you get?", or "will I be in charge or will you?". To me, those who persist in asking such questions and worshipping, as "SS needs," those that I described earlier as "Security and Status" much more than they are "Service to Students." That, I think, is most unfortunate.

My plea is simple and straightforward. I ask that all of us - those in career education, those in career guidance, and those in vocational education join together in a common concern and a cooperative effort to meet the six kinds of basic student needs I have outlined here. If we can all view career educacion as a concept, career guidance as a service, and vocational education as a program and, further, if all of us will recognize and acknowledge how greatly we need each other, we will all be more successful in meeting these student needs. After all, isn't that why we exist?